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Message Text

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12
ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 IO-03 SP-02 PRS-01 INR-05

EB-03 EA-06 NEA-07 SAB-01 EUR-08 L-01 NSCE-00 /061 W
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R 151532Z MAY 75
FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3325
INFO AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
AMEMBASSY ACCRA
AMEMBASSY MONROVIA
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY PREORIA
AMCONSUL CAPETOWN

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABIDJAN 4091

LIMDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (CORRECT TO ADD EO TAGS AND SUBJECT
LINES)

CAPETOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: OVIP (DAVIS, NATHANIEL) PFOR, XA, IV
SUBJEC: TRAVEL OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY DAVIS: MEETING WITH
PRESIDENT HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY

1. SUMMARY: IN 90-MINUTE MEETING DAVIS CALLED ON PRESIDENT HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY OF IVORY COAST MAY 12. PRESIDENT PRESENTED HIS VIEWS ON U.S. - IVORY COAST RELATIONS, COMMODITY ARRANGEMENTS, AND WIDE RANGE OF WORLD ISSUES, INCLUDING SOUTHEAST ASIA, MIDDLE EAST, EAST-WEST RELATIONS, IMPACT OF ENERGY CRISIS GAP BETWEEN RICH AND POOR NATIONS, AND PROSPECTS FOR WORLD PEACE. END SUMMARY.

2. ASSISTANT SECRETARY DAVIS AND AMBASSADOR CALLED ON PRESIDENT
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FELIX HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY OF IVORY COAST AT HIS ABIDJAN RESIDENCE

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MAY 12. STATING HE HAD RETURNED FROM YAMOUSSOUKRO RESIDENCE SPECIFICALLY FOR MEETING, HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY PRESENTED BORAD PANORAMA OF HIS VIEWS ON WORLD ISSUES, DRAWING LESSIONS OF IVORY COAST DEVELOPMENT AND HIS EXPERIENCE OF WORLD AFFAIRS TO SUPPORT HIS OPINIONS (MOST OF WHICH ALREADY FAMILIAR TO DEPARTMENT FROM PREVIOUS EMBASSY REPORTING).

3. PRESIDENT SAID HE CONSIDERED U.S./IVORIAN RELATIONS TO BE EXCELLENT AND WISHED COOPERATION TO DEVELOP EVEN FURTHER. HE REFERRED FONDLY TO HIS MEETINGS WITH THREE PRESIDENTS OF THE UNITED STATES, STATING THAT HE CONSIDERS THE IVORY OCAST TO BE A WESTERN COUNTRY AND THE U.S. THE FOREMOST COUNTRY OF THE WEST IN ECONOMIC, SCIENTIFIC, AND MILITARY AFFAIRS. AS A FREIND OF U.S., HOWEVER, HE FELT FREE TO OPEN HIS HEART TO US WITH CONCOMITTANT OBLIGATION TO MAKE US AWARE OF WHAT HE CONSIDERS TO BE MAJOR WORLD PROLBEMS.

4. INTERNATIONAL ISSUES RAISED BY HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY INCLUDED FOLLOWING:
A. INTERNAL DIVISIONS WEAKEN WEST IN FACE OF PERSISTENT, CONTINU-ING COMMUNIST THREAT. IVORY COAST ITSELF SEVERLY LIMITS ITS CONTACTS WITH COMMUNIST NATIONS AT PRESENT. IN ADDITION TO YUGOSLAVIA (AMBASSADOR RESIDENT IN BAMAKO) AND RUMANIA, PRESIDENT SAID IVORY COAST WILL SOON HAVE RELATIONS WITH POLAND. EVENTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA WERE QUOTE DISTURBING UNQUOTE FOR IVORY COAST AS FREIND OF U.S.
B. SOULTION HAD NOT YET BEEN REACHED IN MIDDLE EAST. IVORIANS HAD HAD QUOTE TEARS IN THEIR EYES UNQUOTE WHEN RELATIONS ISRAEL FINALLY BROKEN. ISRAEL IS AFRAID AND RELUCTANT TO ACCEPT WESTERN GUARANTEES IN LIGHT OF EVENTS. RUSSIAN ROLE IN AREA IS NOT CONSTRUCTIVE.
C. AFRICANS ARE DISTURBED BY QUOTE CHRONIC INSTABILITY UNQUOTE OF SOME STATES AND INTRA-AFRICAN DIVISIONS WHICH BENEFIT COMMUNISTS AND SLOW DOWN ECONOMIC DEVLOPMENT PROCESS.
D.AFRICANS, ALMOST TOALLY DEPENDENT UPON AGRICULTURE, ARE DISTURBED BY ATTITUDE OF WEST TOWARD PRICES OF THEIR PRODUCTS WHICH ARE TOO LOW IN FACT OF RISING PRICES OF MANUFACTURED GOODS. COMMODITY AGREEMENTS, ALTHOUGH USEFUL, ARE INSUFFICIENT, SOMETIMES SERVING ONLY TO SOLIDIFY LOW PRICES. REFERRING TO SLOW PACE OF NEGOTIATIONS,PRESIDENT SAID QUOTE DOCTOR MUST ARRIVE BELFORE
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THE PATIENT DIES UNQUOTE.

5. DAVIS RESPONDED THAT U.S. APPRECIATED AND UNDERSTOOD PRESIDENT HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY'S VIEWS ON THESE SUBJECTS AT HIGHEST LEVELS. WEST REMAINED COMMUNITY OF COMMON INTERESTS AND WOULD DEFEND SHARED VALUES. U.S. WISHED NO MISUNDERSTANDING OF ITS CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO PEACE NOT OF ITS STRENGTH IN WAKE OF DEVLOPMENTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. U.S. ALSO IS CONCERNED OVER GAP IN STANDARDS

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OF LIVING BETWEEN DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING NATIONS, DIFFERENCES EXACERBATED BY ENGERGY CRISIS WHICH HIT POOREST HARDEST. U.S. IS PREPARED TO PARTICIPATE IN CONFERENCES ON COMMODITY AGREEMENTS ON COFFEE AND COCOA. AFRICAN IN GENERAL AND IVORY COAST IN PARTICULAR, UNDER HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY'S DIRECTION, CAN PLAY CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE IN PURSUING COMMON GOALS.

6. PRESIDENT DID NOT RAISE SOUTHERN AFRICAN ISSUES IN MAY 12 MEETING. HOWEVER, NATIONAL ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT PHILIPPE YACE DURING COURTESY CALL MAY 13, SAID THAT HE HAD SEEN HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY EARLIER IN DAY AND HAD SPECIFICALLY BEEN ASKED TO BRIEF DAVIS ON IVORIAN POSITION ON DIALOGUE WITH SOUTH AFRICA.

7. YACE SAID THAT IVORY COAST REMAINED IN FAVOR OF DIALOGUE SINCE WAR IN SOUTHERN AFRICA WOULD DESTROY QUOTE NEUTRALITY OF AFRICA UNQUOTE AND WOULD PROVIDE TISSURE IN WESTERN SOLIDARITY FOR RUSSIAN INTERVENTION. IVORY COAST CONTINUES TO RECIEVE EMISSARIES SENT BYSOUTH AFRICAN PRIME MINISTER VORSTER AND HAD COURAGE TO CONTINUE PURSUIT OF DIALOGUE. (YACE ADDED THAT PRESIDENT SENGHOR OF SENEGAL COULD NOT PURSUE DIALOUE AS OPENLY AS IVORY COAST BECAUSE SENGHOR, UNLIKE HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY, WAS THREATENED BY INTERNAL OPPOSITION. THUS, WHILE VORSTER HAS NOW BEEN AUTHORIZED TO ANNOUNCE THAT HE VISITED HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY LAST SEPTEMBER, NO MENTION IS TO BE MADE OS SENGHOR'S PRESENCE). DAVIS RESPONDED THAT WHAT HAD INITIALLY BEEN LONELY PATH FOR HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY WAS NOW BEING WISELY FOLLOWED BY OTHER COUNTRIES AND THAT U.S. HAD WHOLEHEARTED ADMIRATION FOR IVORY COAST'S EFFORTS TO SEEK PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT IN SOUTHERN AFRICA.
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